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SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

DEPARTMENT FOR NP/MNA, NEA, EUR/PGI, EUR/ERA, EUR/AGS

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SUBJECT: IRAN EXILE GROUP SAYS NEW REGIME DETERMINED TO

BUILD NUCLEAR WEAPONS

REFS: A) VIENNA 2254 B) VIENNA 2270

This message is sensitive but unclassified.

[1](#)1. (SBU) SUMMARY: The Paris-based National Council of Resistance of Iran (NCRI) claimed at an August 8 press conference in Vienna that the new Iranian regime was determined to continue its nuclear program "to build the bomb." An NCRI official argued that the "cat and mouse game" with the IAEA and Western negotiators was designed to buy time and Western concessions for the new regime. He called for immediate referral of the dispute to the UN Security Council. The official quoted what he said were internal Iranian government documents to support his allegations. Two exiled Iranian nuclear experts who attended the press conference underlined the NCRI's accusations against the new Iranian regime. End Summary.

[1](#)2. (SBU) NCRI spokesman Dr. Farid Soleimani and Iranian expatriate scientists Dr. Ali Reza Assar and Dr. Manouchehr Fakhimi held a well-attended press conference in Vienna on August 8 to air allegations against the new Iranian regime. According to the Iranian exile group:

- The new Iranian regime is continuing to pursue a clandestine nuclear program. The claims about the program being dedicated to civil energy production, they said, are "a blatant lie;" Iran's oil and gas reserves render the cover story of a civilian program absurd.
- The IAEA is "being fooled" by the new Iranian regime, as centrifuges are shuffled from one site to another.
- This "cat and mouse game" with the West only serves to buy time and concessions from the EU.
- The EU and U.S. should get tough with Iran and refer the matter immediately to the UN Security Council.
- Placing the Iranian exile group "People's Mujaheddin" on international terrorist lists was "a major mistake."

"Internal" Iranian Government Report

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[1](#)3. (SBU) NCRI spokesman Soleimani referred to an internal Revolutionary Guard report entitled "Appraisal of Two Years of Talks with the EU," which refers to assembling "thousands of centrifuges." The regime

applauds itself on a successful strategy vis-a-vis the EU, which allowed Iran to continue its nuclear program while winning important concessions from the EU. Further, the internal report refers to the "weak reaction by the EU in May 2005" and "weak language by El Baradei in June 2005" as major successes of Iran's "appeasement strategy." According to Soleimani, the report concludes, "the EU and the U.S. must now accommodate our demands."

NCRI Assesses Impact of Ahmadinejad Election

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14. (SBU) According to the NCRI panel, Ahmadinejad's election as President "has clearly led to a militarization of Iranian politics." For example, the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Council (IRGC) was now "increasingly acting as a political party. The IRGC was now in charge of security, police, and intelligence agencies, and crackdowns on demonstrators have become more severe than before." The NCRI predicts that the new regime will now include Revolutionary Guard members in top government positions. Further, Iran's new regime was "determined to push its agenda in Iraq" by launching a "vast campaign to empower fundamentalists there."

Nuclear Program

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15. (SBU) According to the NCRI spokesman, there is no doubt that the new regime will speed up plans to develop nuclear capabilities, since "orders have gone out... to have all resources go to the nuclear program." NCRI spokesman Soleimani said that Revolutionary Guard Brigadier General Jafari Sahroudi, who allegedly was involved in the 1989 assassination of three Kurdish leaders in Vienna (reftels), has assumed a key role in this scheme. Soleimani stated that the Iranian nuclear program was "completely under the control of the Revolutionary Guards." He noted several nuclear research facilities to watch in addition to the known sites, especially two campuses of Malek Ashtar University.

16. (SBU) Soleimani quoted from an Iranian parliament (Majlis) report dated February 2004, "obtained from sources inside Iran," which showed the Majlis had not known of the clandestine nuclear program at that time.

Exile Scientists Confirm Plans For Nuclear Program

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17. (SBU) Iranian scientist Dr. Ali Reza Assar, a former Revolutionary Guard advisor, added that, based on his contacts with Revolutionary Guard officials in 1986-1987, it was clear that a secret uranium enrichment program was already underway at that time. He said he had frequently

overheard statements from Iranian officials that "we need a nuclear deterrent." The revolutionary government had earmarked "hundreds of millions of dollars" in the 1980s for development of nuclear weapons.

18. (SBU) Iranian geologist Manouchehr Fakhimi called Iran's claim that its oil reserves would soon be depleted "absurd." Iran had proven oil reserves to last at least 75 years and natural gas reserves for 250 years. Fakhimi claimed that regime was continuing plutonium production with centrifuges and was seeking supplies of beryllium, which, in combination with copper and polonium 210, can be used to build nuclear bombs.

VAN VOORST